Uncontrolled Terror: The Censored Fatalities of Guggenthal Youth Welfare – Summary by Peter Siegfried Krug

After the years in the Salzburg-Itzling children's home, where the violence was institutionally organized, the placement in the foster family in Guggenthal in 1972 was expected to be a liberation. However, the supposed freedom in the house without a fence, mediated by the Pro Juventute children's aid organization, turned out to be a new, even more arbitrary form of threat.

The structural error of the system continued: Magarethe Leitner (whom we were forced to call "Mama"), unquestionably overwhelmed with 15 to 16 children and lacking any pedagogical training, was effectively left uncontrolled by the Youth Welfare Office.

Loss of Control and Unpredictable Violence

The arbitrary freedom of action of the foster mother, whose behavior I experienced as absolutely unpredictable, created a constant zone of psychological terror. The system failed because it "obviously controlled too little." This lack of supervision enabled:

Physical Violence: Arbitrary slapping, hitting with slippers, or even a wooden chair.

Psychological Isolation: The inability to make contact, no hugs, no praise—a continuation of the emotional coldness experienced in the home.

This new failure in the foster family forced my fellow foster child, Adi Hillimaier, and me into an extremely traumatic survival strategy: We performed "hardening training" in the woods by hitting each other. The goal was to stop feeling the fear of the foster mother's beatings. This self-inflicted violence is an unparalleled document of despair and shows how deeply the fear was ingrained in the child's experience.

The Fatal Consequences and the Censorship of the Truth

The long-term costs of this systemic neglect were alluded to in the book "Abgestempelt und ausgeliefert" (descent into addiction and dependency), but the entire, brutal truth was deliberately censored and suppressed there:

Reinhard Tutschko hanged himself as a young adult.

Daniel Spitzl died from a drug overdose.

These names and fates were submitted to the Salzburg Archive but omitted from the published book. This censorship is the continuation of the systemic turning away on a scientific level, as it conceals the fatal consequences of youth welfare from the public. Magarethe Leitner was never punished for her behaviour, partly because I lacked the courage and opportunity to speak about it for 45 years. For research and the whole truth, these names—the perpetrator Leitner and the victims Tutschko and Spitzl—must be publicly named.

Fear as a Medical Case – and the Consequential Costs

The deep downward spiral of fear of beatings and academic failure (all failing grades) culminated in a dramatic collapse. Lying in bed, alone and helpless, I suffered nightly choking attacks (hyperventilation).

When I ended up in the hospital, the actual cause—the fear of death due to the foster parents' psychological terror—was not recognized. Despite the sharp question from Dr. Michael Bertel, my mother's spouse: "Peter, were you beaten?" (to which I couldn't utter a word due to the learned silence), the doctors falsely diagnosed epilepsy. This misdiagnosis is the final link in the chain of systemic failure: youth welfare delivers the trauma, and the health system misinterprets the physical manifestations of the terror.

Instinctively, as a child, I knew it was fear that almost suffocated me. But as a solitary fighter, I faced a wall of conviction: even my fellow foster child, Adi Hillimaier, believed the epilepsy diagnosis. This discrepancy between my inner truth and the medical/social determination led to a deep insecurity in my identity for decades. I was forced to rebel against the official diagnosis (by throwing away the tablets), while my environment continued to misinterpret my existence. This experience of having to defend the truth as an individual against the established system shaped my psychological and social insecurity well into adulthood.

The publication of these names and this section is the ultimate act to definitively break this learned silence and the decades-long false interpretation of my identity.

Transparency Note: This text was created by the author Peter Siegfried Krug, whereby external assistance was utilized to achieve clarity and scientific logic in its structure and presentation.